

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 227298

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: RH, PDEV, US

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: SITHOLE VISIT TO MALAWI

REF: LILONGWE 1422

1. ALTHOUGH DEPARTMENT UNAWARE OF REASON FOR CALL, SITHOLE'S REQUEST FOR A MEETING SUGGESTS THAT HE MAY HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL US. THE EVENTS OF THE LAST FEW DAYS--ESPECIALLY THE REVELATION OF THE SECRET SMITH-NKOMO MEETING AND THE SUSPICIONS IT HAS CREATED AMONG BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL GROUPS, THE ATTACK ON THE SURVIVORS OF THE AIR RHODESIA CRASH AND SMITH'S IMPLIED THREAT OF NEW RETALIATORY MILITARY ACTION--HAVE APPARENTLY CAUSED BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL LEADERS TO TAKE STOCK AND, HOPEFULLY, RE-THINK THEIR POSITIONS. THUS IT IS POSSIBLE SITHOLE MAY HAVE NEW THOUGHTS ABOUT THE SETTLEMENT PROCESS AND WISHES TO
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DISCUSS THEM WITH US. DEPARTMENT WOULD BE INTERESTED IN KNOWING IF, IN FACT, HE IS CONTEMPLATING A NEW DIRECTION AND WHAT ROLE HE ENVISIONS FOR US AND THE BRITISH. YOU SHOULD ALSO ASK HIM WHAT EFFECT THESE EVENTS HAVE HAD ON THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT AND HIS RELATIONS WITH HIS PARTNERS IN THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

2. IF SITHOLE ASKS FOR A STATUS REPORT ON THE ANGLO-AMERICAN INITIATIVE, YOU SHOULD INFORM HIM THAT (1) OUR POLICY REMAINS THE SAME, AND WE ARE STILL CONVINCED THAT A VIABLE, INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION FOR RHODESIA CAN ONLY COME FROM NEGOTIATIONS INVOLVING ALL PARTIES. (2) RECENT EVENTS, INCLUDING MR. HAYMAN'S STATEMENT THAT THE INTERNAL GOVERNMENT CANNOT MEET ITS DECEMBER 31 DEADLINE FOR ELECTIONS, ARE FURTHER PROOF THAT THE MILITARY AND INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATIONS ARE DETERIORATING AND THAT ONLY A BROADENING OF THE NEGOTIATIONS CAN BREAK THE IMPASSE AND PREVENT FURTHER VIOLENCE. (3) TOUGHENED SECURITY MEASURES, REPRISALS AND ESCALATING VIOLENCE WILL NOT MOVE THE SITUATION CLOSER TO A SOLUTION, BUT ON THE CONTRARY WILL HEIGHTEN TENSIONS MAKING A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT ALL THE MORE DIFFICULT. (4) WE REMAIN COMMITTED TO A SOLUTION THAT ALLOWS ALL PARTIES TO PARTICIPATE ON AN EQUAL FOOTING IN THE SETTLEMENT PROCESS AND DO NOT FAVOR ANY ONE PARTY OVER ANOTHER. CHRISTOPHER

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